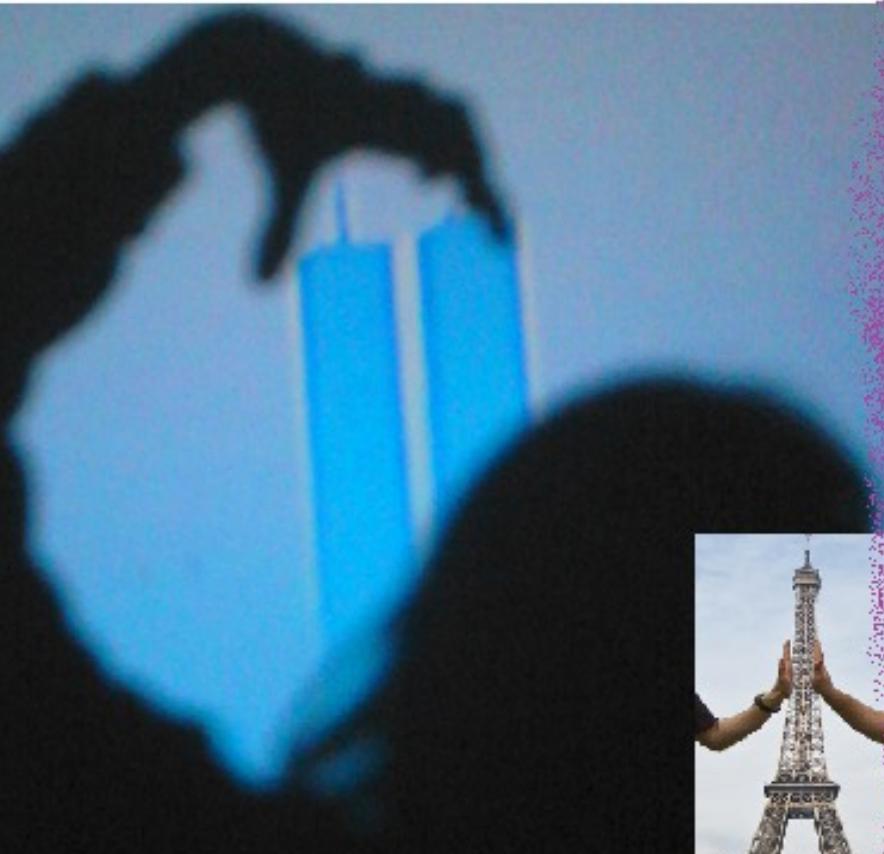


Cross X-X-Wired

HANDY TIPS on moderate Left-Right dyslexia



**CROSS CONTINENTAL BUDDY:
Pappy est bien? L'Sociologie du Pappy**

**ATOMS UNITED: Hey Ho Let's Abba
Heaven On Earth with a So Unusual Girl**

You are great xoxo

It gets better (this edition)

I'm not *really* wired. It's all very silly. *Semi-wired*, I suppose. Sometimes a *bit*.

Cyndi Lauper, what (were) you gonna do with your life

Something niggling in my mind. Maybe what clued me off was my initial silly prejudice against pop artists as a teenager, but it took me a while to figure out some of the reasons why I enjoy her music and own her record but there's a barrier there. (edit: which is all actually really obvious, looking back on this a week later)

In proper 80's style a la Boomtown Rats, Michael Jackson, Madonna etc. she has theatrical dignity and interpersonal emotional atunement that is used in service of love, and romance and cool parties with better racial and gender relations. This is all delivered with pseudo-innocence – or at least an unnatural child-like frivolity. As much as I've listened to Kiss You, it's kind of a mechanical bleating about asinine minor indulgence (edit: ooohhh you seem so bitter, why so bitter?). *I Want Candy* but bratty sounding. My motive for writing this is that I cannot be like her. Being so, so romantically attuned to your own feminine, wise, sensual, yet faux-naive charisma, in your own little network of families and lovers, seems like a groutesque privilege (edit: how about, a right? Or, just the way she happens to be, not necessarily better or worse off than me?). (edit: insert old intro: She is a smart, modern girl whose scope of emotion and intellect applicable to her work is dis-satisfyingly narrow.) Sure, part of me wants to be you. Part of me is better off than you too for all my envy, probably, unless you're faking emotion for theatrical effect. In all those stories there is real pain, in the development of character there is real desire and struggle. You don't mean nothing. You did nothing wrong, really. You're also a lovely person in your videos and on your songs. Why am I sounding this resentment? You model a youthful dream land that's not all that bad. You're meant to be an ordinary girl with a good heart who knows how to say 'no' and yes' to boys and knows how to do her hair and go shopping and all that. That's the way of literally rebelling from the 'patriarch' – i.e. the 'rule of fathers'. "Oh Daddy dear you

know you're still number one, but girls just wanna..." That's a song I long suspected to be an insult to girl's dignity. I get it *now*, you know, girls don't have to be prim and staid. Maybe it's boring and repressive. She won. And it's so intoxicatingly charismatic, catchy, solidarity-begetting that I suspect everybody's eyes are on me to become a *real* girl. No, I don't suspect – it really does hold more currency to be beautiful and tenderly, emotionally expressive, possibly manipulative female. Well, I dunno if there's more currency (though, you're more likely to be a pop star or get a nice retail job) but there's fun in it. Especially when under all those dresses, you get to be all mysterious and dreamy and less concerned about your body. When my attempts at being intellectual, tough, concerned with public matters fail, you're gonna be giggling in the corner... Nah, you'll come to my aid, you BFF's, you mother hens, right? You'll rant, flirt, bully, gossip, distract, plot, beg, cry, and berate whoever it is, whoever this big bully serious tough person is, laugh and make them feel very small and boring and silly. Right? Because, you probably have more sense and sanity about what it means to be a human in your fun and beauty. You're in touch with all your emotions that silly and mean people don't want. I hope, and perhaps will see, that there is evidence of a good and sensible kind of self-regulation amongst the fun and games, that you'll stiffen up and be a soldier if the occasion asks. Perhaps the 80's was the understandable time to loosen up after the austerity of successive wars. The 90s and 00's carried it on. Had a few girly slumber parties back in the day. Fun, bonding over little creative things. Did I not grow into those things or did you not grow out of those things? I suppose that's a silly question. The better question is how to be a whole, well-rounded, adult role model. I think that presentation and enjoyment are a part of that. It's all you need to be a pop star, it's your job. The reason I'm thinking about you, Cyndi Lauper, is because you are so wholesome in a way that is very distinctive but incomplete – not by any intentional head-in-sand over-indulgence or corporate compromise of your deepest wishes or anything, as far as I can tell – because you also so 1980s. 1920s. Frail eras. You're probably smarter but you incite a guiltily sexist guilt – that I can't criticise a beautiful girl for just being herself and not knowing any better, right? Not

being able to be anything but fun, gorgeous, flamboyant? Gonna destroy me with your womanly wisdom and judgment. It won't be academic, it'll be straight to the heart and home. You make me look like a big wifebeater, lady. Oh and you're not a punk but you don't care, everyone likes you. And I know *you* know the world's bigger than dresses and a handful of trendy social issues. I should hold you equally responsible for going beyond that (retrospectively...) by insisting that your work could've been more than good pop *if only...* Ah, I don't know. It seemed perfect for it's time and place, in pop terms and generally accepted moral consensus. Just doesn't touch me deep enough. Doesn't outreach enough, for all the emotion. Ahh that's the word I was looking for – sentimental. Sentimental showing off with questionable political & social statement. Done. You're cool, though – normal & good. Don't want to lay too much shit on. It's ok to be a delectable, frilly jam preserve instead of the bread, meat... I'm not convincingly politically useful & virtuous either, just I'm not sweet. So I guess I'm like, a jar of savoury anchovies. Who likes anchovies? Omega 3, good for brain (unless you must avoid salt). Keep em on the shelf, X-wires and She's So Unusual.

Any change = trauma?

What is this cultural criticism, anyway? If anyone's gonna risk being thrown into insecurity and uncertainty about self-wroth it should be us. Your culture is your anchor and your enjoyment. People don't let that go easily, they just become more complex and excuse making, inventing norms like guilty pleasures and irony and consumption for cultural education rather than actual endorsement. Maybe because of critics, people end up making better culture? Have to be careful not to just be a bully or troll, though. You need to get to the right point of things. People might just dance around, tweak, justify all the older stuff to preserve basically, enjoyment and stability. So if everyone's a dickhead, you just get *savvy* dickheads. The problem is that nobody is bad enough to traumatise enough to actually change. Identity crisis!

Revisitation a few days later (UNWIRED)

Aw come on, why's everyone a dickhead for not wanting to destroy just about everything? Why would it be worth thinking of myself as a dickhead for happily participating in, whatever I was even talking about? Capitalist consumerism blah blah. I guess. Destroying the earth, being part of a bad team. I dunno if I'm the one to make the call that we're all over-indulgent dickheads. We'd simply get used to being called dickheads and carry on seeking enjoyment and stability, as per instinct. Yep, I'm a dickhead. And I'd still probably be a dickhead, if I was a real, stubborn, criticism-incorporating agitator for the liberation of humankind. What an awful term – agitator. I'd rather be a dickhead. But, who's *really* going to be critiqued to the point of existential anxiety? Why is this so brutal, this article, anyhow – don't some people change their behavior dramatically without horrible trauma? I have seen people begin to do to church and say they find peace in themselves after becoming 'born again'. Nobody can verify the factual, supernatural validity of that religion, but cases of transformation of attitude and behaviour across many aspects of life are facilitated by what is real of it. Generally, I would assume, kind evangelists would be behind most of the success stories. What of the fire and brimstone preachers, the harsh decriers of contemporary culture, the serious and angry? Surely they have some conversions that result in more than just a pervasive fear and existential anxiety. And, the secular critic does not appeal to God or Satan, demons or angels – though vague and threatening terms and undermining of what basic human dignity they have, afforded by socialisation in their given culture, might have a similar effect. At least you can *hate* a critic or a fire and brimstone bigot preacher, though. God forgive you if you're not presented with a choice to reject, against your immediate, unthinking inclinations.

“LEFT ALTERNATIVE” (PART UNWIRED)

The left has failed to come up with an alternative to capitalism post-USSR. Ah, really? So what? You know how much the Left has impacted current arrangements in a long, brutal struggle since before your great grandparents were kneading their one pair of pantaloons, living off oatmeal in a one bedroom tenement house with lice and patched up threadbare things, working

12 hours in chemically toxic factories? Being told by that it's drink or sloth or some unknown sin banishing them to poverty by some Salvo's CEO? The impact of class struggle has been naturalised, aka gotten used to, to the extent that it seems too obvious that living conditions for the masses can improve without destroying the economy, without destroying social order, without destroying the managerial and innovative capacities of the upper classes. It has seemed to unnecessary to mention this – that the world could turn just without insidious inequality – that people forgot, and actually took seriously the accusation that “the left has no alternative to capitalism”. We are somewhere in the middle between hyper-capitalism and total equality, aren't we? It seems to be our insistence on highlighting the presence of capitalism and its evils everywhere we go that, rather than creating urgent change, gives a sense of being engulfed. This engulfment takes the form of bumbling insecurity when asked about how the *real world* should be run. We I dunno how everything in the fucking world should be run. How about, more or less the same, but minus the dickheads and manipulation? All the well-off people having some attitude adjustments? You know, people could do work and sort things out like with every life challenge (which I can't fucking think about all at once) but not in the process of trying to get 10 houses, treating your underlings like you're mates but ripping them off and corrupting their children's minds, collectively paying a bunch of guys who think it's OK that some people get worse health care and education and so on. I can't think of of every economic or business situation and advise change, that's the job of other people. I have no manifesto or procedural policy. It's up to us to decide how not to be grotesquely selfish in any given situation. We all seem stuck doing selfish things because everybody else is doing some selfish things too, and it doesn't occur to us to simply make moral, observation-based, and often aesthetic cases for the right degree and form of inequality in any circumstances. For a start, all children should be afforded well-rounded social development alongside the responsibility to make decisions that allow the continuity of this freedom and relative material equality into adulthood. In fact, to a degree, this already exists, unless there are any schools that allow the children to section off land and keep

the weaker children out. There is no such school. There is, in every industrialised country I can think of, a preserve of childhood where business and war as serious pressures are not permitted. There is also the venerated family unit, which may be twice as distressing to break up as an exclusive refuge of cosy commonality and more or less equal resources. There are cooperative groups everywhere, you see. You're on the defensive, fretting about smaller and smaller breaks in unity until everyone becomes unhappy exploiters of their fellow human in isolated numbness. What you need is a bigger vision, you right wing who have no vision but a half-compassionate, perpetually warring competitor society. The left is a bunch of whiners about the lukewarm camaraderie aiding international business diversity-inclusion breaking down and the right is a bunch of whiners about the lukewarm camaraderie of national solidarity and greedy power blocs breaking down. The left's got something waiting in the wings that has decent common sense about I, unlike your block-headed nationalism (you know, in the era of *planes* and other such technologies that've only been evolving for as long as humans have existed, moron) or cold socially-retarded unfettered libertarian 'individualism' or whatever permutation of anti-social you warm to. I'm not cynical and unproductive. And you might be more of a lefty than you think, if you're not *really* anti-social (some rednecks, some honest business people more mentally attuned to the collective than competing in the numb, masturbatory game/religion of capital manipulation at the intolerable expense of others...). Just DON'T, get SUCKED IN by all those people who are more selfish hierarchy, socially retarded than you are. That's been happening, and the alternative is *you* fucking getting it together, being brave, proper and authoritative, you stupid child. Stop pointing fingers at the babbling lefties and examine your own ambitions, you little men and women. Somewhere in the child-rearing, patriotism, team work, charity and your travels is a fucking lefty so own up to it and carve out your own real life solutions to inequality before some fuckhead comes along and steals what the thankless people before you built, the *good* people on the so-called 'left' and 'right' with a regard for their fellow human being.

Bourgeois lefties (some of you), there you fucking go too, with all your big words and pessimism about every activity under the sun that isn't grazing on cheese and pontificating to the exclusion of most of the rest of the working and middle class. You know, looking at the event or article topic smorgasbord featuring an aesthetically-sanitised, scattered sociology and philosophy excluding the objective, dumb details of how anything actually functions through the crucial social actors, raising your children in this free-floating disengagement as detached little individuals, "hmm... hmm... something, something... Look what's wrong here, let me tweak that, pull a string here or there."

Disembodied doctors, frankensteins creating the most embarrassing social experiments in 'community' the 20th century saw, along with their corporate business and economist cousins.

Otherwise, raised in relative isolation with nothing but abstract, almost mathematical grasp of principles, they will wedge themselves into this blurry 'mainstream' with all the flimsy economic, argumentative capital they can wield.

"I enter the land of Bogan, or rightwing fuckheads, of proletarians, of complacent rich snobs knowing one thing; that I am of a very intelligent persuasion and that your land does not permit enough of women, people of colour, and so on! Answer me this; you consider yourself good, do you not? We are of the same distant kin, are we not? Well, let us in! The degree of your failure is commensurate with the multiple oppressions your day to day existence has failed to incorporate into your model of economic and social activity; your *socius*. I do have spells to weave, to make you listen, but I am afraid they are weak spells of art and music. I am acquainted to subjects of your king, Capital, I however may add, which has allowed me to acquire land.

Come and see, my potential friend and complete fucking oppressive difference-phobic backward shit. Oh, you are as good of a person as I am? Why aren't you Fighting Capitalism, comrade? Do you not see the scourge it is on people's lives, on the earth, our health, on minorities, the poor and so on? No, no, don't quit your job. We want you to Join The Discussion, that is all. Perhaps we will allude to storming your workplace at some point, oh, some people do that. We are mainly interested in inclusion and exclusion here.

And, I must stop, for I am not a brave and gallant knight. I am a weak outsider. I know nothing about all of your lives and values and why I can eat and sleep in peace so I might just cry and shout and beg and mourn that I am a girl and whatever else because that is what I have been taught... I wish you all wouldn't exclude me from life... OH and I forgot, you're also oppressed to, look at your shitty conditions, and if not oppressed then you're AWFUL" All the stock standard pigs look on, of course, from their pens, perhaps with some minor but admittedly not futile seed of self-awareness planted in them, or apathy, or mistrust in veiled righty sentiments, or fear if their education inculcated a sense of stupidity and inferiority in them. Is there any alternative to the lefties? To the righties? Well. That depends on the people. *You* little people. Time for us to grow up in our thinking.

CONNECT TO DISCONNECT or DISCONNECT TO CONNECT? (part unwired)

Introduction, 27/06/2017

This is possibly the most dangerous thing I have written. Take caution if you are prone to over-indulging in digital lassitude in cushiony technopleasures (that Vaporwave thing?) or lonely, reptilian – I mean reptile brain – pass-times. Can I trust you, reading this outline of a possible social arrangement (which seems a bit 17th century anyway) to say, "fuck off, we don't need this", if it's going to encourage you to stay inside and be played into the hands of escapism-peddlers in alt-reality and jerks on the internet? You might forget all your friends and everybody. This vision of peaceful atomisation is usually established through a resentment or inexperience with social unity too. You must see that you haven't found salvation in mindful detachment from politics, and that progressing as a species is not necessarily achieved by clinging to vague potentials of 'the internet as an equal platform' and 'people being rational'. We simply do not have the infrastructure and social cohesion to have this in the near future (and that infrastructure and cohesion is more than the National Broadband Network, anti-censorship, pro-censorship, and all those debates, in the shadow of Silicon Valley workaholics and

progressively intrusive and pointless apps). Just don't. Waste. Your. Time. Be a live human. Frankly, I find what I wrote here disturbs and embarrasses me. I was being speculative and a bit playful for intellectual exploration. There may be an implied pessimism that I do not have or believe in right now, though. So please, don't take this religiously. Don't indulge in fantasy too much, don't role play like this. Hug somebody close to you. Unless you don't actually have anybody. So, I guess * hugs * should have to suffice for now, until you dig your way out of loneliness.

This kind of distance/intimacy envisioning perhaps should be forbidden for naïve eyes, make sure you're ready or court disaster. And don't overdo it, if you do need it.

A few days earlier:

Near-complete isolation is the way to remove trauma from 'society'. 'Society' is merely the mutual agreement of all citizens to stay away from each other and die alone. (edit: **AHHH SHIT, you know I was just playing around, saying that, right?!**) We have invented pain killers and other mass-produced items of comfort (edit: **NOT ENOUGH AT THIS STAGE, TOO MUCH CAN RUIN YA**). That is all, we do not need to talk apart from science and order maintenance. We will achieve a level of purity (edit: **what a DISGUSTING word 'purity' is**) and mutual respect that is impossible with messy, discriminatory, dynamic human relationships. We do not need people except in depersonalised, largely anonymous, softly-toned, rational text-based communication regarding the science of improving material conditions and maintaining the bliss of solitude (edit: thinking about C.S. Lewis's Wiggle Marshes – Marshwiggles, I mean, from Narnia. One was called Puddleglum. Have not read the book since I was a child). What's all this 'socio-emotional development' and 'dignity through participating in the difficult social world' thing apart from a means to establish a modern utopia where de-individualised (edit: **YOU CAN BE UNIQUE BUT IT'S NOTHING TO DO WITH YOUR SENSE OF INTRINSIC WORTH TO YOUR COMMUNITY, like, you'll be BORN different and it'll be OKAY, and if you BECOME**

different it'll be OKAY so long as you hurt no-one else n' don't try to put yourself ABOVE people cause of it) camaraderie and beauty of mass order (**HONEST MUTUAL INTERESTS**) trumps awkward social performances and natural hierarchies? Picture a futuristic skyscape with paths between buildings (why not?) and all these people with nothing much to say to each other, walking around in blissful unconcern for all the clutter in they could have in mind. The news solely concerns science and ideas to secure the future first and foremost, and play games, experience sensations, and create things to anonymously release into the public like a butterfly.. A child playing alone in a summer field, eating buttered fresh breadrolls on the grass before climbing a tree to jump into clear water is the mood here. Then, they can sit on a window seat looking at the skyline. They make a nice paper aeroplane without thinking, and fly it out the window, seeing someone in the distance pick it up. Satisfaction received, but no credit given. This sounds like an embarrassing fantasy to get carried away in in the current state of affairs, though. I am *running away* from the times I have been a neglectful, detached internet dweller. It's like being a cave person, fiddling with your tools and carvings, hunting, climbing, looking at things perfectly without a sense of loss, but only some of the time because the internet shows you lots of social things that make you lonely, and odds are you know what it's like to be social from when you were a kid (edit: and along the continuum of ever-more sparse moments of real belonging), and you realise that you need a job and companionship and all that. So it doesn't work, yet. It is unfortunate, since being effectively social is an offensively (edit: sometimes) specialised skill, especially when people are outspoken about caring and equality and participation (edit: have to work with/work at socialising with someone to be someone to any group). It is seemingly impossible for continued, free social interaction including absolutely everybody to result in a non-heirarchy, so don't try to drag socially autistic, tired or otherwise socially disadvantaged (ugly? Disinterested?) people into it and tell them it's because you're a lovely and inclusive person who knows what's best for their well-being. (edit: though I am doing it – it is a compromise). You are dragging them into play fights and challenges to prepare for

bigger conflicts later on – admit it (edit: scary social world, twists and turns, dramas, guilt, ecstasy, inclusion, exclusion...). If you don't stand for some kind of ultimate, egalitarian unity at the end of it that has any great deal of realism, then you can shut up. I may divorce from your patterns of thinking but I am not anxious, depressed, schizophrenic etc. Thanks for your concern. **(edit: BIT HARSH EH? PLEASE DON'T LET PEOPLE BE ALONE, NEED PLUGGING IN TO SOCIAL ENERGY, NETWORKS OF MEANING, IMPORTANT!)**

No, I actually love people a lot and it is important for people to be around other people in an open, reciprocal, leisurely way to learn social respect, as we have to deal with people. This utopian vision is dangerously seductive in that it may spur on daydreamy lulling layabouts who are disengaged with the processes needed to bring out an order that includes everybody (edit: ah, guess I'll cite the summary of that Vaporwave book from Zero books, just ignore that fucking meme book that's been floating around) They may even sympathise with the distribution of technology over the third world without the social grit and unsheltered, care-driven discernment to see real cynical control and physical power-grabbing (edit: aw, now if I'm referencing, I'm going to have to cite my housemate's friend who hung around a bit after his van broke down at the Newstead BP, the shitbox van/home, called Tim. Can't of my get his term 'brain juice' (for what click bait would call dopamine and serotonin) out of my head, referring to that little feeling you get from words that make it feel all cosy and truth-y, tho they're words and reality's complex) The smartest, the old-world attuned, the familiar with beauty, those capable of exquisite curation of pure and enlivening nature and contrivances are required **(edit: I MEAN THAT ART WON'T NEED TO BE SO COMPLEX AND CYNICAL, NOT THAT PURE ART NECESSARILY EXISTS)**. Those things are further away from modern systems of separation like the internet and cultural niche compartmentalised boxes than the messy outside world, however comforting. What is needed in a superior order is life. **(DURRRR LIFE YEAH OF COURSE WHAT ELSE)**

This kind of separation would perhaps be one of the only orders that escapes awkward awareness of the supreme joke of social organisation and absurd reproduction – the joke of life. **(edit:**

SOUNDS LIKE SOMETHING A LOSER WOULD SAY, FORGET THAT THOUGH, TRUST IT FITS INTO SOME VAGUE PSYCHANALYTIC/PSYCHOLOGO-PHILOSOPHICO-ECONOMIC MODEL HERE) It is a joke – it's why degrees of stress and joy make laughter. It all ceases to be a joke and become bliss when the ebbs and flows become less jarring; when it is trustworthy. Sex is a joke, dancing is a joke, and we see it as children instinctively seeing contrived or foreign ritual as a joke until we develop sufficient tolerant piety (which, in the bucketloads required to be a functional onlooker in a queasy, joyless, incomplete society, can lead to libido-dampening passivity). All the poor stiffs and the squares wanna escape all of it, even the reprehensible homophobes and xenophobes, just want to be free. All the loose, joyful pagans, revellers just laugh at life at every opportunity, in their most

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extremely absurd and jovial, even forgetting to laugh in their gayness – leaving the lesser stiffs to laugh for them, like laughter vampires. These revellers are in fact the most conservative of all, as pagans centering behavior around the ultimate life and death drama, while the stiffs want heaven. They want choirs, order, liberation from squabblers and vain technologies thrashed out nature that doesn't really listen. You want

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somebody to listen, don't you? It's in your blood, it's in your genes to sometimes hate life and want somebody to listen for a reason. You want to love life too, but you don't want to give up in cycles of apocalyptic orgiastic vanity. You will love and hate again, cyclically, pagan or stiff (or a bit of both, as we all are); the question is whether that existential angst is soothed by the proper application of VISION and EQUALITY. You must know that this can't carry on, in respect

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to your own evolutionary instinct. All of the religions and isms' grasp at regulating nature and escaping from the joke of life but they are sieves. People leak out and it could be you, in the Wicker Man or finding laughing reprieve in

violent radicalism, or becoming a lonely party addict neglected by the whimsy of your peers when nature takes it's course, or kill their souls with the forced and stagnant ritualism, or a vain societal drop-out pretending they are on the path of God praying in abject self-imposed isolation from any societal meaning aka. Future. People will find despair or search for a promise of regard outreaching for their kind, for their situation. They'll find faith in a big picture if earth creates despair. Begin with instinctual mammalian co-dependence and empathy present to varying degrees in any culture anywhere, then see deflection or adaptation driven by people with foresight and perception of vulnerability in self and others. The progress of human intelligence of a noble kind, crawling forward in splutters and leaps with imperfect definition. It is, always has been heaven on earth that any good, properly grown-up 'Christian' ultimately wants (and probably Muslim and Buddhist too, but I know too little to reflect substantially), with all the rules being merely a temporary austerity measure prescribed to stabilise society and individual focus in service of technological and economic development progressing towards the fulfilment of it's doctrine of equality under one 'God'; the imagined image of perfection. Your anxiety of exclusion and dire insignificance in nature and society is what religion exploits; your foreboding sexual irrelevance, your vulnerability to illness and volatile nature (and the vain jokes of social life forms it contains), and your lingering compassion for everybody who life begins to reject. Life, sex, pleasure, laughter, escapism, goading death is not the image of 'God' in a society you can call on facing the reality of death. Death-courting fascists and life-revelling sex fiend celebrators are equally existential-angst-inducing to anybody who is a step closer to peace. They've given up on the future. They see it as more of the same. They are vain pretenders. Sometimes they, sometimes clutching on to a beautiful idealistic core, rationally see the helplessness of their ideals in their specific meat suits, flesh, surrounding culture, or fate of the earth they live in; hence the beauty in fragility us modern, liberal-christian-conservative-socialist-whatever-equality-idea-we-have societies see. Oh, you had potential, they show us our potential, holding on to faith that far, like a giant black shading illuminating a white heavenly

cloud core. That's only a story, though; the true clear-sight they had in judging their attempt at faith and progress as futile is debatable. Whatever the real situation, whatever the degree of *real* faith, the judgement to succumb to empty pleasures *had* to have faith to become a story. The sadness in the story is the repentance and the reminder to CHANGE. No empty ritual here. You need to see the future. The imperfect stories of these sickly, slutty, masochistic admixtures of universal love and rejection of hopeless social complacency. Ever wonder why the most degraded are the most biblically faithful of all? It's because the desperation fucking means they want to live in a different way. The straight and cosy Christians of contemporaneity are as systemically vain as the exclusionary, ritualistic pagans of centuries past, controlling nature with ritual that does not work. People are flaking off and/or trying to stretch the very temporary joviality or security these social formations provide. **(edit: Pagans are much more than the Wicker Man. As are Christians. Correct me, correct me...)**

Look at it; you get reason, a stupid and incomplete culture, a drive to maintain and reproduce and change your environment, an innate awareness of pain and then a tendency for your brain and gut to try to put them all in balance. You can't think it through properly rationally with your such primitive set of words, you just have to feel all your feelings at once, after enough time seeing the vulnerability and pleasure of human social life. When you feel it all at once, keep it in mind, you find either the right joke for the moment or a possible propulsion to a step for the community in the largest scope of interdependence; a step that protects you as an individual body coming up with this stuff. Your greater mind, that thing evolved for social cooperation, can be shut up in blissful childlike indulgence and the body will be fine with that. Soon the mind will follow suit, if you let it. You might be lucky, depending on what economy and society predecessors of yours have created for you, and if you function within it. You're in a sieve, though. Beware, still think of the fallen. At the very least, maintain the potential for a future world in a token or something if you're mired in otherwise meaningless suffering or happiness. Anyhow,

how you feel only matters to the world in the effects it drives. In feeling pain in your inability to not be part of the sieve, you are the very victim of the sieve that drives the compassionate reasoned faith of the progress-drivers. That's your role, make it a story, take comfort and eternal pride in that. Find your own crucifix-like story-device and look at it. Don't give up on communication, you've tasted human life, depend on mass-activity, how can you escape it?

Of course, again I'm saying nothing at all as it is everything that both you and I have already absorbed to some capacity, but in a re-invigorated form (re-educating self into society, into proper aliveness). Please take it as a whole, taking each little mistake with a grain of salt, as over or under-emphasis is the very problem that is being outlined here. Do not, for instance, focus on the emptiness of either the stiffness or the revellers. It's more of the same stale shit, the same neurosis holding us back from life cherishing you and me and everybody. We all kind of suck, you hear, and we're all kind of great too. My point is, we don't know where to go next, what to do. Can't tell you here (when, how to indulge your senses, what to think, how to feel..). This writing's a place holder, written with the most faithful sincerity I could muster from my semi-corrupted mind. Fill in with your mind, will you? Say that you want this, that you want a future for us all, work on your mind and gut for it. Save Our Souls! (...Abba... Those pagan-sex-liberated socialist Christian monarchist happy-sad mixups, Abba, father. It means father, it's no Swedish word, that. No wonder they're sad revellers, metallers, the lonely, beautiful egalitarian Swedes) Why not talk about Abba, eh? I really hope Fernando is about the Spanish Civil War but I'm not sure. Forget the history, think of the mix of the naturally frail, the heroic and the sublime (artificial, hope-giving, mechanically-ordered-musical) beauty here... And you know, they're nothing special, they're just people who can perform, and you know, I'm just a person who can write, who has the right 'brain juices'. It is YOU who is beautiful, reader, with our brain juices combined. ;) (if you consent, of course) Which sounds perhaps too prematurely celebratory, kind of slutty (**edit: not that that is essentially wrong!**), but I dunno, nothing to do according to what seems like good

judgement right now but dance and imagine utopia. Think I've done my work for the day writing this. Someone'll like it. Yep, bring the music. The right time.

MUSIC STUFF: PAPPY



Alright, so I might've exhausted you with all this political pontification and I haven't written much at all about Australian Independent Underground Music so, I will at last appease the Buddy Records owner and French inclusive education teacher Viktor and write about Pappy. Pappy, I have not heard yet, but was recommended to me very soon after he heard about my barely-existent zine. It is a compliment that he trusted it's integrity pre-emptively and I think Brisbane owes him for all the shitty times waiting at traffic lights, and I dunno, what else was mildly embarrassing to show some civilised Parisians? A bit dull here, lots of the time. I also have not really committed to studying Frenchas I had said, though, just enough to respect his English

capabilities.

Ladies and gentlemen, we at Cross Unwired are proud to present a new release by French label Buddy Records. You will love this record! Straight out of Melbourne, all across the world to France and back again to you! Give a round of applause to (here is where I glance at the notes) *Puppy!* Sorry folks, *Pappy!!* Though there is a puppy on a complimentary sticker you might get if you order the tape. The puppy is called Buddy and is a real dog.

Alright, this extended preview is called Snack, too. There is a puppy on the cover, too. And some kind of caterpillar. Monochromatic though, lest you be overwhelmed by twee, and it looks like there might be a blurry painting of a pattern of stomach cells. The songs are all one word and average under two minutes.

1. SCREEECH feedback. Tame punk bassline. Ahh, saved by this Ramones x disco beat. She doesn't like her job and is saying things about the city and somebody who sleeps while she works. I have not paid attention to the lyrics precisely but it may be a positive segue for self-righteous, over-worked or under-worked right wing populists to sympathise with more positive peer groups instead of being socially awkward to anybody either richer, or poorer, or who is most people. I am sure that despite making a scenario of labour imbalance a part of their song, they sympathise with the misfits (and probably The Misfits too, but maybe it's frowned upon in Melbourne art circles?) and will make everybody think it's Why Don't You Get A Job and then hit 'em with some anarcho something. That is, if those people would get past the obviously at least semi-educated retro-referencing of the cover. Play in a shit bar really angry. Then say, "Hello fellow worker, can I have a moment to talk to you about Communism? That's ok, but I will leave you with this pamphlet."

Oh what, a saxophone? Looking more and more like a neat salad of cross-decade punk influences. It's almost too intentional, but I thought that about Fat White Family and it's damn catchy. They've got a lot more snot in them, while this frontwoman sounds... Pretty matter-of-fact. Got the *idea* of an attitude down pat in the lyrics, got

some suitably mundane and honest stories highlighting modern life and relationships, but it's not authoritative. That is fine, but it's less entertaining than it is nice and pure, like Waterfall Person. Or, competent but not really pushing it. I couldn't be that competent. I'd get too frustrated. Any how, saxophone is simple, not too obtrusive, I guess a Stooges, X-Ray Spex nod.

2. "Please come off the roof now, it's not safe there." This one's nice. One deviation from the punk canon is that this one is stolid and kind. I dunno what that person was doing on the roof, maybe just being silly, or maybe something more sinister, but it's not rubbing anything in your face. It's your big sister down there. "I got you down, it was me." Starting to see a pattern here. She's going to work while you're sleeping, she's telling you to get off the roof because it's not safe, what next? Loyal, patient Pappy. Are they going to feel the need to find another frustration card apart from the pretty standard punk riff's, though? I dunno, maybe it's not in their nature?

3. Now she's at a party and is noting a lot of mundane things. Low key but serious song, a bit Aloha Units-esque. Melodic and repetitive vocals like Kitchen's Floor's earlier, prettier songs (edit: all-Australian accent, too). Wouldn't be surprised if they were KF fans. This is a blur of heat, sweat, domestic darkness but some kind of twist. It's called Pageant. Ahhh, I see. Her jumper got burned up, her favourite one. She drank some Bacardi and it was rot too? Oh there is also an Adelaide guy called Ben Quici (Life After Football) who did a similar (but dark 80s) song mourning his favourite shirt being worn into the ground. Not really any irony in either of those songs, maybe a droll, implicit self-awareness that you'd assume knowing that everyone knows we're not 'meant' to be stuck on 'superficial' things but there is a real, honest bleakness in showing objective situations. Show more than tell in literature, right? She also stepped in a puddle, and it was dark. Lost her favourite jumper, and it was hot. She is maybe pissed off at somebody. She says her Souvlaki was yum. Teetering between wanting to give them a prod and appreciating this sometimes accurate portrayal of a night out. It isn't really wallowing in the banality like it's the worst, and it isn't

spasmodically loathing it's (and everybody else's) incapacity to break out of it all, either. The 'pageant' title does imply an uncomfortable bitterness. What if I'm mishearing some lyrics here? Does she say 'pageant' and is lacking confidence about your appearance a key theme, more than I acknowledged? This definitely isn't Spice Up Your Life. Very laid back dregginess and drinking, the fall back in the shadow of the 'superficial rabble'. Other side of the same coin.

4. Carlton. More angry/clean/neat tame punk. Nice big sister talking about things she hates. Carlton Brewery? Not sure what she's talking about, she's actually mustered an angry tone here. No, not the Carlton Breweries strike. More social mundaneness. "Be my friend, we'll talk about all the things we did today." It's pretty bleak. It seems like she feels like she's stuck in an awkward cultural impasse and finds a little bit of meaning in being basically a good person but is tired, I think. Actually nah, that's reading into it too much, I can't judge her character on these songs. Nah, of course not, but it's the story the songs seem to tell.

5. Waiting and thinking of snacks, waiting for the day to end. "Insaaanne." Bit of vocal emphasis there, like a more childlike Daria being forced out of monotone. "Try to think of something to say, but I think it wouldn't be right". She is just cracking through that layer of caked-on shyness. It's not a coy, cute shyness, but a pervasive sludge, where you feel simultaneously irrelevant and obligated. This can lead to insanity. Not the grating, enlivening agitation of 70s punks, who were the off-cast young, averagely-proportioned, thin men capable of militaristic power, with the exception of Ian Dury (who still had the manly, straight-talking, powerful British voice and wit) and some girls who wielded a bit of aggressive sex appeal or andrygyny. Not doing what they were raised to do with all the grit and health. The problem here is that we don't know what we're supposed to do, or what we are supposed to not do. They were yelled at, they yelled back and formed social alternatives. With this song, I don't know if the blank tone is to be attributed to her doing what she's supposed to, you know, using pre-formatted music styles to express the blankness because of a certain privilege in being told you can do things because girls/good

students/millenials can and should do anything and everything and you've got your friends, your nice art teachers, the job and the neat resources you need. But it fucking is blank and bleak despite whatever coddled, lukewarm environment and emotional/spiritual outlook this probably reflects. She's frustrated and feels to be lacking in energy. Behind this, of course, is a big network consisting of the powerful men and women who have shaped her ordinariness and it's not clear if these songs are an admirable effort to work through the sludge to show it how it really is or a kind of complacency. Both, I think, like the frustrated mood of Nirvana minus the fun and aggression. Like Nirvana fronted by a soft-spoken Matilda (you know, the film with the little smart girl and the psychopathic headmistress) but her family's slowed down by half, is half as mean, and her friends at school have bags under their eyes and stare at their phones while Miss Honey tries to get everyone enthusiastic about breaking the rules by making the classroom interesting, but half the class don't care and some stupid prig says she's not allowed to, and the poor idealistic, saintly teacher starts to crack telling off some snickering brat drawing dicks on his mural contribution while she's helping somebody with auditory processing disorder and OCD... Matilda and her friend sit awkwardly recalling Social Studies lessons, not knowing what or who to focus on. "Did you do your homework?" "Yes." "Nice work, friend. I finished mine on the school bus." "Oh, I did that once. Um, I'm thinking of joining the band but I don't know, do you want to come?" "OK, if I can bring my lunch?" "I want to go to the tuckshop". Miss Honey gives up and hands out boring worksheets, pausing to compliment the two well-behaved girls and apologise for the other's behavior. Miss Trunchbull comes in, actually looks like Julie Bishop. "OK, I have an announcement to make. The cake you raised money for to give to Brucie and End Fat Stigma/Obesity Awareness Month for your team building project has been banned by the health department and the tuck shop ladies, [insert name]'s Mum (I know you might resent him, but be nice). We have to keep it in the staff room. Some very special students might be able to have a slice, though, if I can get some cleaning volunteers? Everyone who misses out can receive a hypo-allergenic lolly and a colouring book

donated by the community. Now, I want to see positive attitudes. This is character building. Life's not fair." She seems very proud of the fact that life is not fair, and that she is one of the self-designated winners, and they the losers. She is also happy about the cake, but will have a 1cm sliver with lite yogurt, gloating about having turned people against each other. She continues, "Now, Miss Honey, what are these worksheets? Oh, how is *that*, children? Maybe you can have two lollies, hmm? Work hard and play with gratitude, as they say. Or maybe Miss Honey might teach you something in a fun way? She's only new, but you'll see she's a nice lady, you're very smart children..." Alright, bit off track. Anyhow, Matilda at least has some inclination to perceive the sickly passivity she's mired in. She has to work twice as hard as the bratty, more obnoxiously powerful (but still neglected and hardened) boys to speak up, or the party girls, or the people who have a 'thing' like religion or obsessive talent or somewhere to fall back on. Matilda needs the group, is native to the classroom as close as she can belong to anything. *Punk rock*, let's try this thing on. Come on guys, I'm no good at fireworks and bells and whistles but I need some kind of mic, bear with me. Lunch break. Music room. "Should we sit here and wait, or should we go inside and play... Snack!" Goes the song.

6. Walking down the street and seeing people she used to know. Walking down a rocky road (is that related to the last song, Snack? Darryl Lea Rocky Road?) "I've got a bad memory. Don't you wanna be like me." "Tiiimme goes byyy" Yep it does. Alright, so this is a loooonggg review and it's around dinner time. Have to say this song sways my impression slightly to the negative. She describes walking down the street, sounds a bit pissed off for some reason. There is a fine line between being disgruntled and bored with everybody in a decent, ultimately benevolent idealism and just being a boring passive-aggressive snob. It could be either way, but I don't know what she stands for here. It could be that just, she's difficult to get along with for no good excuse and has the gaul to sing about it like it's some punk rawk thing, or it could be *more* that she's alluding to the overall disunity. "Bad memory, don't you wish you were like me" is alluding to apathy, I suppose. Bad things other

people want to forget, yes. Or maybe, it's alluding to her own bad memories and the people who wished they knew people. Pretty ambiguous. It's alright. Hm, maybe her voice sounding young adds to my impressions here. It's like Perth's Cold Meat, but there's no pure rage and addictive rhythm, which isn't a bad thing, but sounds good to me. Maybe, if anything, that reflects poorly on myself more than this gently derisive, soft band. Maybe the girl screaming NAUSEAAAA and I HATE BANTER is the real aggressive snob. Shouldn't assume that rage expressed is proportionate to real character, just an act that sounds better, appeals to some base, physical instinct. Think I'd rather be with the Cold Meat frontwoman in a fight, a picket line, an ally on a dark street, but how do I know she's not an unstable brat on meth who hates people, usually for no good reason and four times as hard? Nah, it's doubtful, it's too intense and articulate to be a pervasive mood, she seems to enjoy melody and mastery and physical movement (haven't seen Cold Meat but they must). Anyhow, she's on some kind of team with a sculpted and aggressive character. Pappy is a bit cautious and lost. They don't know if they can or should convincingly tell people they are FULL OF SHIT (Cold Meat Electric Eels cover) and spare themselves the indignity of yapping in lethargic mimicry. Ha ha! Just noticed Nausea is about failing to quit smoking and she's yelling "MUMMY! TAKE ME AWAY!". Pappy probably doesn't smoke, or has the odd one at parties. What's the name mean, anyhow? Portmanteau of pap smear and a puppy? Appealingly odd, a slight touch perverse. Seems perfect, actually, showing the banal and helpless side of being a girl. Ah wait, google says 'pappy' is a childish term for 'father'. Dunno what I think about that. Meant to be an allusion to patriarchy, along with that 'Pageant' title I suppose. Cold Meat want to dismantle shit and feel it in their nerves. Pappy, maybe don't want or need to offend their nice pappy. Ohhh, wait, I see the alternate definitions. The Cambridge dictionary states, "Pappy food is unpleasantly soft or contains too much water." Ha. Alright, I'm gonna leave this review right here. I'm right, they know I was right, they constructed this on purpose, being seemingly incapable of visceral sincerity in art and still going forward with it anyway without any shame, thinking that a token self-awareness will make up for this slippery

spinelessness propped up by a fading inherited cultural prosthesis. How much are you falling through the cracks here? How much do you really want to grow up? Who's holding your hand, and/or were you always kind of standoffish? The skeptical quiet kid? How much do you *care* about *punk rock*? I like that you're making me think, Pappy, I do like that. I also like what you are *not* pretending to be, out of all the overdone alternatives you could have chosen. You're being yourselves, and I grew up with that same dull, apathetic voice. I'm sure lots of us did, and learn to beat it out of yourselves with lots of re-learning, remedial socialisation, posturing, and psychoactive substances. Be expressive, active, charismatic, rhetorical! Yeah, nah, I dunno. You have chosen to make do.

7. Laaasstt ooonnnee. "I don't like secrets" That's cool, neither do I. "But when it's mine, I don't seem to mind." That's honest, with pretty cynical implications if true for everyone. Self-interest human nature? No, not really, cause she at least admits it.

Not sure how I want to sum it all up. It's a concept album, if not going-through-the-motions punk. Wonder how they'd sound live and raw? Has an admirable smart/dumb unpretentiousness and is unsettling behind the seeming complacency. And, it proved to be a unique writing stimulus.. 8-) thank you
p.s. I did write that title without using google translate or anything like that. For the sake of honesty, I should keep it there. Pappy est pour moi, Pappy est bien, je parlais d'Pappy tre... s'ne pas petit... Merci... Scuzi moi, je regret mais s'ne pas possible pour moi parlais pour francais... mais...wi, Internationale musique s'ne pas impasse. Est fantastique. Tre bien pour moi, pour tu... Liberte, wi... Tre philosophique? N'est ce pas? Oh, I feel like I can say more than I thought. I am not aware of any gross mistranslations, but I trust you know I mean well!

Salutations from:

